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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/511,707	10/15/2004	Tsuyoshi Shimoboji	09857/0201259-US0	6749
7278	7590	03/30/2007	EXAMINER	
DARBY & DARBY P.C. P. O. BOX 5257 NEW YORK, NY 10150-5257			OLSON, ERIC	
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
		1623		
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE		
31 DAYS	03/30/2007	PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/511,707	SHIMOBOJI, TSUYOSHI
	Examiner Eric S. Olson	Art Unit 1623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 October 2004.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) 1-23 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date Oct. 15, 2004.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

Detailed Action

This application is a national stage application of PCT/JP03/04949, filed April 18, 2003, which claims priority to foreign applications JP2002-116508, filed April 18, 2002, JP2002-209429, filed July 18, 2002, and JP2002-331551, filed November 15, 2002.

Claims 1-23 are pending in this application and subject to restriction herein. Applicant's preliminary amendment submitted October 15, 2004 is acknowledged wherein claims 3-11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, and 22 are amended and the specification is amended to indicate continuity.

Restriction

Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-13, 16, 17, 20, and 21, drawn to a hyaluronic acid:copolymer composite according to instant claims 1.

Group II, claim(s) 14 and 15, drawn to a method of treating joint diseases:

Group III, claim(s) 18 and 19, drawn to a method of surgical operation.

Group IV, claim(s) 22 and 23, drawn to a method of repairing tissue.

The inventions listed as Groups I-IV do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or

corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: The shared technical feature, namely a hyaluronic acid modification product in which hyaluronic acid and/or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof is bound to a block polymer, is already known in the prior art as a drug delivery matrix. Any special technical feature over the prior art would have to relate to the specific method of use in which the hyaluronic acid copolymer was being used, or to other specific features of the copolymer that are not shared among the inventions of groups I-IV. Specifically, Kim et al. (Reference CK included with PTO-1449) discloses such a composition synthesized and used as a sustained-release drug delivery matrix. (p. 70, left column last paragraph, right column first paragraph) Therefore a hyaluronic acid copolymer of this type does not constitute a special technical feature over the prior art.

Furthermore, the therapeutic methods of groups II-IV are drawn to methods of treating separate and unrelated conditions. Any search of all of these groups in one office action would constitute an undue and excessive search burden.

Because the above restriction requirement is complex, a telephone call to applicant's agent to request an oral election was not made. (See MPEP 812.01) Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric S. Olson whose telephone number is 571-272-9051. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Shaojia Anna Jiang can be reached on (571)272-0627. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Eric Olson

Patent Examiner
AU 1623
3/26/07

Anna Jiang

Supervisory Patent Examiner
AU 1623